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Understanding multicultural attitudes: The role of group status, identification, friendships, and justifying ideologies

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Abstract

Questions of multiculturalism and the management of cultural diversity are much debated in many countries. The present research aims to further the understanding of people's attitude toward multiculturalism by examining ethnic majority and minority group adolescents in the Netherlands. In two studies, the endorsement of multiculturalism was examined in relation to ingroup identification, perceived structural discrimination, outgroup friendships (Studies 1 and 2) and the ideological notions, communalism and individualism (Study 2). The ethnic minority group participants were found to be much more in favor of multiculturalism than the majority group. Furthermore, ingroup identification, perceived discrimination, outgroup friendships, and the two ideological notions appeared to be related independently to multiculturalism. However, high ethnic identification was related to lower endorsement of multiculturalism among the majority group and to higher endorsement of multiculturalism among the minority group. In addition, outgroup friendships only had a positive effect on multiculturalism for the majority group. The effects for perceived structural discrimination and communalism were positive and similar for both groups of participants. Individualism had a negative effect on multiculturalism for both groups.

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Keywords: Multiculturalism; Group status; Identification; Ideologies

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1. Introduction

Questions of ethnic and cultural diversity are central in most western countries. Different responses have been developed to manage the increasing diversity within countries. One major response is the debate on multiculturalism. There are different versions of multicultural ideologies and related practices, but, in general, they all reject the idea of cultural assimilation. Multiculturalism stresses the importance of recognizing cultural diversity within the same political framework as well as equal chances and opportunities (Fowers & Richardson, 1996; Kymlicka, 1995; Parekh, 2000). Like communitarians in the field of political philosophy, multiculturalists prioritize the concept of cultural communities that would provide the central context within which identities are shaped.

However, multiculturalism is also criticized because it can lead to reified group distinctions that fuel conflict and separatism (Brewer, 1997). Similarly, others have argued that multiculturalism endangers social unity and cohesion, and also contradicts the liberal ideals of individualism and meritocracy (e.g. Barry, 2001; Bissoondath, 1994; Schlesinger, 1992). In addition, the impact of multiculturalism may differ for the ethnic majority group and ethnic minorities. People from the former group, for example, may stress the desirability or necessity of adaptation of ethnic minorities to the dominant culture (Arends-Tóth & Van De Vijver, 2003; Van Oudenhoven, Prins, & Buunk, 1998). People from the latter groups, on the other hand, may emphasize their own identity and the necessity of cultural diversity (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002).

The present research focuses on majority (ethnically Dutch) and minority group members (Turks and Moroccans) living in the Netherlands. The focus on Turks and Moroccans was deliberate because the great majority of these groups members are Muslims and in the Netherlands the discussion on cultural diversity focuses predominantly on issues related to Islam. Furthermore, the Turks and Moroccans are very similar in that they are the two groups that are least accepted in Dutch society (Hagendoorn, 1995) and that have the worst socio-economic and educational position. In addition, members of both groups have been found to think quite similarly about issues of cultural maintenance and adaptation (Van Oudenhoven et al., 1998). The central question of this research is the extent to which the endorsement of a multicultural society differs between the Dutch and Turks/Moroccans and in how far this endorsement is related to key social psychological variables. Two studies were conducted in which multicultural attitudes were examined in relation to group identification, perceived structural discrimination, and outgroup friendships (Study 1 and 2), and the ideologies, communalism and individualism (Study 2).

2. Multiculturalism

Berry and Kalin (1995) argued that groups are more in favor of multiculturalism when they see advantages for themselves. Several theories have emphasized the role

of group interests in the dynamics of intergroup relations (e.g. Blumer, 1958; Bobo, 1999). For example, because the status hierarchy is differentially beneficial for members of low and high status groups, the social dominance theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) has proposed the ideological asymmetry hypothesis. This hypothesis implies that hierarchy-attenuating ideologies such as multiculturalism will appeal more to minority or low status groups than to the majority or high status group. Hierarchy-attenuating legitimizing ideologies support the interests of low status groups and challenge the interests of high status groups. For minority groups, multiculturalism offers the possibility of maintaining their own culture and obtaining higher social status in society. Majority-group members, on the other hand, may see ethnic minorities and their desire to maintain their own culture as a threat to their group identity and status position (Barker, 1981; Van Oudenhoven et al., 1998). Hence, we expected (H1) that minority group members will support multiculturalism more strongly than majority group members.

3. Ingroup identification

Multiculturalism is about groups and group identities. There is considerable empirical evidence that in an intergroup situation those with high ingroup identification are more likely to show a variety of group-level responses relative to low identifiers (see Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999). This is especially the case when group interests are at stake and the value of the group identity is threatened.

The more minority group people identify with their ethnic ingroup, the more likely they are to consider it important to preserve their own culture. The endorsement of multiculturalism can be seen as a collective strategy for dealing with a negative group identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and for challenging group-based hierarchy and domination (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Furthermore, ingroup identification is an important condition for collective action (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001). Hence, for ethnic minority groups, we expected (H2) a positive association between ingroup identification and multiculturalism.

In contrast, for the majority group, a negative association can be predicted. Ethnic Dutch people have been found to focus on the negative and threatening aspects of multiculturalism (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003; Van Oudenhoven et al., 1998). The more majority group members identify with their ingroup the more they can be expected to try to protect their group interests and status position (Verkuyten & Brug, 2004; Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002). Hence, a negative association was expected (H3) between ingroup identification and the endorsement of multiculturalism for the majority group.

4. Perceived structural discrimination

Active support of cultural diversity and group identity is not the only key notion in present-day debates on multiculturalism. Another core argument underlying these

debates is the notion of social equality and equal opportunities (e.g. Barry, 2001; Vermeulen & Slijper, 2003). Ethnic groups should not only be able to maintain their culture but also to participate equally in society. Multiculturalism is, typically, closely linked to the notion of equality and is seen as an important ideology and policy approach for addressing inequality and structural discrimination. For example, in the recent United Nations (2004) Human Development Report on Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World it is argued that structural discrimination is a major obstacle for building culturally diverse societies. Also, political philosophers have argued that ethnic and cultural group rights can be necessary for ensuring that all citizens are treated equally (Kymlicka, 1995; Parekh, 2000). In addition, equality and the prevention of discrimination and racism appear to be central arguments in favor of multiculturalism in everyday ways of thinking of Dutch people (Verkuyten, 2004).

Hence, it can be expected that the perception of structural discrimination in society influences the endorsement of multiculturalism. That is to say, people who perceive more pervasive discrimination towards ethnic minorities are probably more in favor of multiculturalism (H4). This association can be expected for both majority group and minority group participants, although the relationship might be stronger for the latter group.

5. Outgroup friendships

Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis proposes that contacts with outgroup members can improve outgroup perceptions and evaluations. Such a positive effect is not self-evident but depends on many conditions and factors (see Amir, 1969; Brown, 1995). Pettigrew (1998) has specified the contact hypothesis by looking at the content of the contact necessary for the reduction of negative perceptions. He argues that intergroup friendships are pivotal in this respect. In fact, friendships would arouse positive emotions leading to more favorable outgroup attitudes. Using samples from France, Germany, Great Britain and the Netherlands, he found that participants with outgroup friends did indeed score significantly lower on various prejudice measures (Pettigrew, 1997). Outgroup friendships will increase feelings of sympathy and concern for the situation and problems of the ethnic outgroup. Hence it can be expected that having more outgroup friends is associated with a stronger endorsement of multiculturalism.

This effect of friendships on multiculturalism can be expected for the majority group participants in particular. In the Netherlands, multiculturalism is typically discussed in terms of ethnic minority groups and is seen as supporting the identity and improvement of the position of these groups (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003; Van Oudenhoven et al., 1998). In addition, because the Turks and Moroccans together form only 4% of the population in the Netherlands, the chance of having outgroup friendships is more exceptional for the Dutch than for the Turks and Moroccans. Hence, for the Dutch participants, friendships with minority outgroup members can be expected (H5) to be associated with a stronger endorsement of

multiculturalism. For the ethnic minority participants such a relationship is less likely and majority outgroup friendships may even be related negatively to multiculturalism.

To summarize, the following expectations derived from our discussion will be examined. First, we anticipated that, compared to the Dutch, ethnic minority participants would stress the importance of multiculturalism more strongly (H1). Second, we expected for the minority groups a positive association between ingroup identification and multiculturalism (H2), whereas a negative association was expected for the majority group (H3). Third, the perception of structural ethnic discrimination was expected to be associated with a higher degree of support for multiculturalism (H4). Fourth, the number of outgroup friends was expected to be related positively to the endorsement of multiculturalism (H5), particularly among the majority group.

6. Study 1

6.1. Method

6.1.1. Sample

Study 1 was conducted in six secondary schools. The questionnaires were administered in the classroom under supervision. Students completed the questionnaire anonymously. We focused on Dutch and Turkish/Moroccan adolescents with parents of the same ethnic background. On an open-ended question concerning their ethnicity, 355 students described themselves as Dutch and 67 as Turkish and 25 as Moroccan. Of these students 47.7% were females and 53.3% were males. Participants were between 15 and 19 years of age and their mean age was 16.9. There were no gender and age differences between the ethnic groups. The Turkish and Moroccan participants were either born in the Netherlands or came to this country before the age of four.

6.1.2. Measures

In their representative study of the Dutch population, [Arends-Tóth and Van de Vijver \(2003\)](#) developed a Dutch version of Berry and Kalin's (1995) Multicultural Ideology Scale. Studies using this Dutch version have found clear evidence for measurement equivalence or factorial similarity of this scale across ethnic groups ([Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003](#); [Verkuyten & Brug, 2004](#)). Hence, this version was used, three sample items being, 'Migrants should be supported in their attempts to preserve their own cultural heritage in the Netherlands', 'If migrants desire to preserve their own culture, they should do so within their own circles', 'The Dutch should make more of an effort to familiarize themselves with the habits and cultural backgrounds of immigrants'. The 12 items (of which six were negatively keyed) were measured on scales ranging from 1 (disagree strongly) to 7 (agree strongly). Cronbach's alpha was .86. For the Dutch, the alpha was .87 and for the Turks/Moroccans it was .82.

Ingroup identification was assessed by means of eight items presented immediately after the participants indicated their ethnic group membership on the questionnaire. The items measure the importance attached to one's ethnic background and are similar to items on Phinney's (1992) Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure. The items (four were negatively keyed) were measured on scales ranging from 1 (disagree strongly) to 7 (agree strongly). Three sample items are 'I feel a strong attachment to my ethnic group', 'I like being a member of my ethnic group', and 'I have a strong sense of belonging to my ethnic group'. Cronbach's alpha was .85 for the sample, .82 for the Dutch, and .83 for the Turks/Moroccans.

Perceived structural discrimination was measured with four questions on scales ranging from 1 ('No, certainly not') to 5 ('Yes, certainly'). The questions were, 'The police always focus on ethnic minorities first when something wrong happens', 'Ethnic minorities always have to wait longer than the Dutch when they need something from the government', 'When, economically, things get worse for a company, ethnic minorities rather than the Dutch are the first to be laid off', and 'At schools, ethnic minorities are treated more harshly compared to the Dutch'. For the total sample, Cronbach's alpha was .76. For the Dutch alpha was .75, and for the Turks/Moroccans it was .74.

The number of ethnic outgroup friends was measured with a single question. The participants were asked whether their best friends are of the same ethnic group as themselves. There were seven response categories ranging from 'Yes, all of them' (1) to 'No, almost none' (7).

6.2. Results

6.2.1. Comparing mean scores

For descriptive purposes, Table 1 presents the mean scores for the three independent measures (identification, perceived discrimination, and outgroup friends) and the two groups of participants. For examining, whether the Dutch participants' answers differed significantly from those of the Turkish/Moroccan participants, the three measures were examined as multiple dependent variables in MANOVA. There was a significant multivariate effect (Pillai's), $F(3, 451) = 84.683$, $p < .001$. The univariate results shown in Table 1 indicate that the two groups differ significantly on all three measures. In comparison to the Dutch, the Turks/

Table 1
Means and standard deviations for the different measures for Study 1

	Dutch (<i>N</i> = 355)	Islamic groups (<i>N</i> = 96)	<i>F</i> -value
Ingroup identification	4.79 (.98)	5.93 (.83)	104.13***
Structural discrimination	2.76 (.76)	3.33 (.81)	39.42***
Outgroup friends	2.15 (1.16)	3.70 (1.52)	112.59***

*** $p < .001$.

Moroccans identify more strongly with their ingroup, perceive more structural discrimination, and have more outgroup friends. This latter result reflects the numerical positions of the groups in that the chance of having outgroup friends is greater for the Turks and Moroccans than for the Dutch.

6.2.2. Predicting multiculturalism

First, we examined the correlations between the three independent measures for the Dutch and the Turkish/Moroccan participants separately. Only one correlation was significant: the relationship between ingroup identification and perceived discrimination for the Turks/Moroccans (.23, $p < .05$). All other correlations did not differ significantly from zero.

Stepwise multiple regression analysis was used for examining whether the independent measures predict the 'endorsement of multiculturalism'. In the first step, ethnic group (0 = Dutch and 1 = Turks/Moroccans), and the centered scores for ethnic identification, perceived discrimination, and outgroup friends were entered. In the second step, the three interactions between ethnic group and identification, discrimination, and friends were included. Table 2 shows the results. The model in the first step explains no less than 40% of the variance in multiculturalism. Ethnic group, perceived discrimination, and outgroup friends are significant independent predictors of the endorsement of multiculturalism. The Turkish/Moroccan participants endorsed multiculturalism more strongly than the Dutch ($M = 5.32$, $SD = 1.04$, and $M = 3.64$, $SD = .86$, respectively). In addition, perceived discrimination and the number of ethnic outgroup friends were positively related to multicultural attitude. Ethnic identification, however, was not a significant independent predictor of multiculturalism.

The second step accounted for an additional 6% of the variance in multiculturalism. All three interactions made a significant contribution to the explanation

Table 2

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis with the endorsement of multiculturalism as dependent variable: standardized regression coefficients (beta) for Study 1

	Endorsement of multiculturalism	
	Step 1	Step 2
Ethnic group (Dutch)	.50***	.36***
Ingroup identification	-.02	-.12*
Structural discrimination	.16***	.09*
Outgroup friends	.14**	.24***
Ethnic group \times identification		.29***
Ethnic group \times discrimination		.11**
Ethnic group \times outgroup friends		-.17***
Multiple r	.63	.68
r -square change	.40***	.06**
F -change	68.47***	15.58***

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

of multiculturalism. To examine these interaction effects, separate regression analyses were performed for the Dutch and for the Turkish/Moroccan participants. For the Dutch, ethnic identification was negatively associated to multiculturalism ($\beta = -.14$, $p < .01$), whereas for the Turks/Moroccans this association was positive ($\beta = .38$, $p < .001$). Thus and as expected, for the Dutch, higher ethnic identification was related to lower endorsement of multiculturalism whereas for the minority groups higher identification was related to stronger endorsement of multiculturalism.

The perception of structural discrimination was positively associated with the endorsement of multiculturalism among both groups of participants. However, the association was stronger for the Turks/Moroccans ($\beta = .31$, $p < .001$) than for the Dutch ($\beta = .11$, $p < .05$). The difference in association was significant, z -value = 1.97, $p < .05$.

As expected, outgroup friends was positively associated with multiculturalism for the Dutch participants ($\beta = .25$, $p < .001$). Hence, the more ethnic minority friends the Dutch participants had the more they were in favor of multiculturalism. For the Islamic group no significant association between outgroup friends and multiculturalism was found ($\beta = -.05$, $p > .10$).

6.2.3. Discussion

It was found that multiculturalism was much more strongly endorsed by Turks/Moroccans than by the Dutch. In general, multiculturalism has more to offer to ethnic minority groups than the majority group. For the former, multiculturalism presents the possibility for heritage culture maintenance and upward social mobility. For the latter, multiculturalism is often seen as a threat to cultural dominance and higher social status (e.g. Van Oudenhoven et al., 1998; Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002). However, the effect of ethnic group on multiculturalism was moderated by several key factors, namely ingroup identification, perceived structural discrimination and the number of outgroup friends.

For the minority groups, high ingroup identifiers were more likely to favor cultural diversity and a multicultural society. In contrast, the more Dutch participants identified with their ingroup the more they seemed to focus on the negative and threatening aspects of multiculturalism. These results for ingroup identification are in agreement with other studies that have found that particularly high identifiers show a variety of group level responses (see Ellemers et al., 1999), including in relation to multicultural attitudes (Verkuyten & Brug, 2004).

Multicultural ideologies are not only about the support for cultural diversity but also about equal chances and opportunities. In agreement with this, perceived structural discrimination turned out to be positively related to the endorsement of multiculturalism. Hence, more structural discrimination of ethnic minority groups was related to a more positive attitude towards multiculturalism. This association was found for both groups of participants but was significantly stronger for the Turks/Moroccans than for the Dutch.

The number of ethnic outgroup friends was found to be positively associated with multiculturalism. This result can be interpreted in terms of Pettigrew's (1997, 1998)

specification of the contact hypothesis. Pettigrew argues that particularly friendships increase feelings of concern and sympathy for the situation of ethnic outgroups. In the Netherlands, multiculturalism is seen as supporting the culture and improvement of the position of minority groups. In addition, for numerical reasons, outgroup friendships are more exceptional for the Dutch than for the minority groups. Hence, a positive relationship between outgroup friendships and multiculturalism was expected for the Dutch participants rather than for the Turks/Moroccans. The present results show this to be the case.

A second study was conducted to replicate the findings of Study 1 and to examine whether two important ideological notions are associated with the endorsement of multiculturalism. In social psychology, increased interest in stereotypes and beliefs that question or support the legitimacy of group relations is relatively recent (see [Jost & Major, 2001](#); [Sidanius & Pratto, 1999](#)). There is growing awareness that issues of legitimacy have far-reaching implications and that beliefs can provide ideological support for social and political arrangements. Hence, an increasing number of studies are investigating ideological notions and legitimizing ideas in relation to, for example, social disadvantages, inequality and intergroup relations. However, research has predominantly examined legitimacy using minimal, ad hoc groups as well as in terms of the criteria for group allocation and the perceived legitimacy of specific figures of authority, such as the experimenter. The focus has been less on established groups and the role of general legitimizing ideologies (but see, for example, [Jackson, 2002](#); [Judd, Park, Ryan, Bauer & Kraus, 1995](#); [Sidanius & Pratto, 1999](#)).

Political scientists and (moral) philosophers have put forward various important ideological and practical arguments for defending or challenging multicultural theories and policies (e.g. [Barry, 2001](#); [Kymlicka, 1995](#); [Parekh, 2000](#); [Taylor, 1994](#)). Those defending multiculturalism tend to take a communitarian perspective in which a person's identity is seen as primarily defined by membership in a cultural community. Constituent cultural communities would provide the moral framework for self-understanding, mutual concern and communalism. This emphasis on the central importance of communities and groups is in agreement with multiculturalism that prioritizes group identities and that is based on a conception of cultural groups as relatively internally homogenous. In contrast, the liberal response to multiculturalism argues that all people should be defined and treated in individualist terms ([Barry, 2001](#)). Multiculturalism as a group approach is seen as conflicting with the primacy of personal autonomy and responsibility. Individualism has been found to be an ideology that provides a standard with which to reject various group-based policies (e.g. [Kinder & Sears, 1981](#); [McConahay, 1986](#)).

This lively philosophical debate is far from settled (see [Kelly, 2002](#)). Strikingly, however, there is relatively little knowledge and understanding of whether the ideological notions of communalism and individualism are related to people's endorsement of multiculturalism. Studying white Americans, [Katz and Hass \(1988\)](#) found communalism to have a positive influence on pro-Black attitudes and individualism to have a similar influence on anti-Black attitudes. [Verkuyten and Brug \(2004\)](#) found a negative association between protestant ethic and multicultural

attitudes. This association was found for Dutch participants but not for ethnic minorities.

The present study examined the endorsement of multiculturalism in relation to communalism and individualism. Both ideological orientations are multifaceted notions. The former emphasises the importance of group belonging, interdependence and social concern. The latter stresses the importance of individual responsibility, autonomy and protestant ethic values. In our study the focus with respect to communalism was on adherence to the ideal of group commitment and the concern for groups in society. Regarding our conception of individualism, the emphasis was on individual responsibility and autonomy. It was expected that the endorsement of multiculturalism would be related positively to communalism and negatively to individualism. We had no reasons to expect that these associations would differ for the Dutch and minority group participants.

7. Study 2

7.1. Method

7.1.1. Sample

In Study 2, a questionnaire similar to the one in Study 1 was used in three other secondary schools. In total there were 275 participants: 198 described themselves as Dutch and 77 as Turkish (49) or Moroccan (28). Of the students 50.9% were females and 49.1% were males. Participants were between 15 and 23 years of age and their mean age was 18.2. There were no gender and age differences between the ethnic groups. All Turkish/ Moroccan participants were either born in the Netherlands or had come to this country before the age of six.

7.1.2. Measures

To measure the endorsement of multiculturalism, we used the same scale as in Study 1. The 12 items were measured on scales ranging from 1 (disagree strongly) to 7 (agree strongly). Cronbach's alpha was .93. For the Dutch, Cronbach's alpha was .90 and for the minority groups it was .81.

Ingroup identification was assessed by the same eight items as in Study 1. The scales ranged from 1 (disagree strongly) to 7 (agree strongly) and Cronbach's alpha was .89 for the sample, .86 for the Dutch, and .91 for the Turks/Moroccans.

Perceived structural discrimination was also measured in the same way as in Study 1. The four questions formed a reliable scale with an alpha of .76. For the Dutch sample, Cronbach's alpha was .70, and for the Turks/Moroccans it was .72.

The number of outgroup friends was measured with the same single question as in Study 1.

Communalism and individualism were measured with items that were partly adapted from Katz and Hass (1988) and Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asia, and Lucca (1988). For communalism, we used eight items (seven-point scales; disagree strongly to agree strongly) that focused on the importance of groups in society and

group commitments. The items were on groups in general and did not refer to ethnicity. Four samples of these items are, ‘The groups people belong to are important for who and what they are’, ‘It is important to take the wishes and interests of groups into account as much as possible’, ‘Communities form the backbone of society’, ‘People should not be expected to do anything for their community’ (reversed). For the sample, Cronbach’s alpha was .78. It was .75 for the Dutch and .81 for the Turks/Moroccans.

Eight items (seven-point scales) were also used for measuring individualism. Four samples of these items are ‘People themselves are responsible for their own situation in life’, ‘Ultimately people have to take care of themselves and should not count on others’, ‘People have to make their own decisions rather than follow others’, and ‘You cannot be held accountable for all the decisions you make’ (reversed). Cronbach’s alpha was .73 for the sample, and .69 and .67 for the Dutch and the Turks/Moroccans, respectively.

7.2. Results

7.2.1. Mean scores

Table 3 gives the mean scores for the five independent measures and the two groups of participants. For examining, whether the scores of the Dutch participants’ differed significantly from those of the Turks/Moroccans, the five measures were examined as multiple dependent variables in MANOVA. There was a significant multivariate effect (Pillai’s), $F(5, 271) = 51.19$, $p < .001$. The univariate results shown in Table 3 indicate that the two groups differ significantly on all five measures.

The mean scores for ethnic identification, perceived discrimination and outgroup friends are very similar to Study 1. In addition, and also similar to Study 1, the Turks/Moroccans, in comparison to the Dutch, identified more strongly with their ingroup, perceived more structural discrimination, and had more outgroup friends. The two groups of participants also differ significantly for individualism and communalism. The minority groups endorse both ideological notions more strongly than the Dutch.

Table 3
Means and standard deviations for the different measures for Study 2

	Dutch (<i>N</i> = 198)	Islamic groups (<i>N</i> = 73)	<i>F</i> -value
Ingroup identification	4.70 (.95)	5.86 (.96)	73.16***
Structural discrimination	2.60 (.66)	3.36 (.77)	61.25***
Outgroup friends	2.18 (1.16)	3.43 (1.10)	59.37***
Communalism	5.38 (.74)	5.65 (.81)	6.58**
Individualism	3.83 (.86)	4.67 (.89)	48.29***

** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

7.2.2. Correlations

For descriptive purposes, we also examined the Pearson-Produkt Moment correlations between the independent measures and for the two groups of participants. The results showed two significant correlations for the Dutch sample: stronger endorsement of communalism was negatively related to individualism ($-.19, p < .01$) and positively to perceived structural discrimination ($.17, p < .05$). For the Turks/Moroccans, communalism was positively associated with ingroup identification ($.33, p < .01$). In addition, ingroup identification was negatively related to the number of outgroup friends ($-.29, p < .05$). Hence, high group-identifying Turkish/Moroccan participants had fewer outgroup friends.

7.2.3. Predicting multiculturalism

Similar to Study 1, stepwise regression was used for predicting the endorsement of multiculturalism. In the first step, we entered ethnic group (0 = Dutch and 1 = Turks/Moroccans), and the centered scores for ethnic identification, perceived discrimination, outgroup friends, communalism and individualism. In the second step and as in Study 1, the three interactions between ethnic group and identification, discrimination, and friends were included. In Step 3, the interactions between ethnic group and communalism and ethnic group and individualism were entered into the equation. Table 4 shows the results.

The model in the first step explains no less than 58% of the variance in multiculturalism. Ethnic group, perceived discrimination, outgroup friends, and communalism and individualism are all significant independent predictors of the

Table 4

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis with the endorsement of multiculturalism as the dependent variable: standardized regression coefficients (beta) for Study 2

	Endorsement of multiculturalism		
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Ethnic group (Dutch)	.63***	.64***	.62***
Ingroup identification	-.10*	-.20***	-.20***
Structural discrimination	.15**	.14**	.12**
Outgroup friends	.15**	.22***	.22***
Communalism	.19***	.16***	.21***
Individualism	-.20***	-.20***	-.23***
Ethnic group \times identification		.21**	.24***
Ethnic group \times discrimination		-.04	-.06
Ethnic group \times outgroup friends		-.12*	-.09
Ethnic group \times communalism			-.10
Ethnic group \times individualism			.07
Multiple r	.76	.78	.79
r -square change	.58***	.04*	.01
F -change	58.73***	6.48**	2.94

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

endorsement of multiculturalism. The Turkish participants endorsed multiculturalism more strongly than the Dutch ($M = 5.66$, $SD = .75$, and $M = 3.74$, $SD = .99$, respectively). The mean scores for both groups were similar to those in Study 1. Table 4 shows that perceived discrimination, the number of ethnic outgroup friends and communalism were positively related to multicultural attitude. In addition, and as expected, individualism was negatively related to multiculturalism. Ethnic identification also made a small negative contribution to the prediction of multiculturalism.

The second step accounted for an additional 4% of the variance in multiculturalism. As with Study 1, there was a significant interaction effect between ethnic group and ethnic identification. Separate regression analyses for the Dutch and the minority group participants showed that, for the former group, ethnic identification was negatively associated to multiculturalism ($\beta = -.23$, $p < .01$), whereas for the latter group this association was positive ($\beta = .30$, $p < .001$). Thus similar to Study 1, and as expected, for the Dutch, higher ethnic identification was related to lower endorsement of multiculturalism whereas for the minority groups, higher identification was related to stronger endorsement of multiculturalism.

Furthermore, there was a significant interaction effect for ethnic group by outgroup friends. Again similar to Study 1, the number of outgroup friends was positively associated with multiculturalism for the Dutch participants ($\beta = .24$, $p < .001$). Hence, the more friends from ethnic minority groups the Dutch participants had, the more they were in favor of multiculturalism. For the Turks/Moroccans no significant association between outgroup friends and multiculturalism was found ($\beta = .07$, $p > .10$).

In Study 2, there was no significant interaction effect for ethnic group with perceived discrimination. Hence, for both groups, the perception of structural discrimination was positively and similarly associated to the endorsement of multiculturalism.

The third step in the regression analysis did not account for significant additional variance in the endorsement of multiculturalism. Hence and as expected, there were only main effects for communalism and individualism. For both groups of participants, multiculturalism was positively related to communalism and negatively to individualism.

7.2.4. Discussion

The results of this second study, among a different and somewhat older sample, were very similar to those of Study 1. The similarity of the findings for both studies increases the reliability of the results and offers evidence for their generalizability. As expected, the ethnic minority participants were clearly more in favor of multiculturalism than the Dutch group. Furthermore, for the former group of participants high ingroup identification was related to a more positive multicultural attitude, whereas for the latter group high ingroup identification was related to a less positive attitude. In addition and similar to Study 1, the number of ethnic outgroup friends was positively related to the endorsement of multiculturalism but only for the Dutch participants. Perceived structural discrimination again had a positive relationship

with multicultural attitude and, this time, this relationship was similar for both groups of participants.

In addition to these results, Study 2 focused on communalism and individualism as two ideological orientations that are central in political and philosophical debates on multiculturalism. In these debates the former is typically used to defend multiculturalism whereas the latter is predominantly used to criticize multicultural ideas. In agreement with this, it was found that communalism was an independent positive predictor of the endorsement of multiculturalism and individualism an independent negative predictor. These relationships were similar for the Dutch group and the Turkish/Moroccan participants.

8. General discussion

Questions of multiculturalism and cultural diversity give rise to lively and important debates in many countries and in many spheres of life. Multicultural societies consist of people from diverse backgrounds that face the actual task of living with cultural diversity. Hence, it is important to understand attitudes towards multiculturalism of both ethnic majority and minority group members. This may provide clues for how to influence existing views and to implement practices and policies that improve inter-ethnic group relations.

The present research examined the endorsement of multiculturalism among majority (the Dutch) and minority group (Turks/Moroccans) members in the Netherlands. Two studies were conducted and both showed that the minority group was more strongly in favor of multiculturalism. Ethnic group together with ingroup identification, perceived structural discrimination and the number of ethnic outgroup friends (Study 1), and the ideological notions of communalism and individualism (Study 2), accounted for no less than 46% (Study 1) and 63% (Study 2) of the total variance in support of multiculturalism. Hence, a major part of the variance was accounted for and the difference between the Dutch and the Turks/Moroccans contributed most to the prediction of multicultural attitudes. This finding is in agreement with other studies conducted in the Netherlands (e.g. [Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003](#); [Verkuyten & Brug, 2004](#)) and consistent with the idea that multiculturalism is typically seen as having more to offer to minority groups than to the majority group. For the former, it presents the possibility for maintaining their own culture and increased social equality. For the latter, multiculturalism is often seen as a threat to cultural dominance and higher social status (e.g. [Van Oudenhoven et al., 1998](#); [Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002](#)). This difference in attitude toward multiculturalism can lead to problematic relational outcomes ([Zagefka & Brown, 2002](#)). A lack of reciprocal attitudes and beliefs may hamper the realization of a positively diverse and equal society.

An additional complicating factor is the finding in both studies that for the two groups of participants, multiculturalism was differently related to ingroup identification. For the ethnic minority group participants, ingroup identification turned out to be positively associated with the endorsement of multiculturalism,

whereas for the majority group, identification was negatively related to multiculturalism. These results for ingroup identification are in agreement with other studies that have found that particularly high identifiers show a variety of group level responses (see Ellemers et al., 1999; Verkuyten & Brug, 2004). These results also indicate some of the problems and dilemmas surrounding a multicultural society in which group identities are emphasized and affirmed. For ethnic minorities, a strong group identity is consistent with multicultural ideals, but for majority group members there seems to be a contradiction. For them an emphasis on Dutch identity corresponds more to ideas about assimilation rather than multiculturalism, which is typically seen as threatening to Dutch culture and society. Future studies should examine this relationship in other countries since there are important national differences in dealing with diversity. In most European countries there is a long history of established majority groups and issues of immigration and cultural diversity are relatively novel. In contrast, countries such as Canada, the United States and Australia are largely composed of immigrants and (in part) cultural diversity is a defining characteristic of the nation (Vermeulen & Slijper, 2003). This could mean that the negative association, found for the Dutch participants, between ingroup identification and multiculturalism, might be positive in these countries.

Both studies also showed that the Dutch as well as the Turks/Moroccans were more in favor of multiculturalism when they perceived more structural ethnic discrimination in society. Hence, multiculturalism was seen as one possible response to unequal positions and opportunities and there seems to be agreement among groups that multiculturalism is more acceptable and justifiable when the structural ethnic discrimination is more pervasive (see also Verkuyten, 2004). However, compared to the Dutch, the Turks/Moroccans perceived significantly higher levels of discrimination, and in Study 1 the positive relationship between discrimination and multiculturalism was stronger for the latter than the former group. So from the minority group perspective, structural discrimination is seen as more problematic and as a somewhat stronger argument for multiculturalism.

In both studies, Dutch participants with more ethnic outgroup best friends tended to be more in favor of multiculturalism. This result supports Pettigrew's (1997, 1998) argument about the importance of friendships for positive intergroup relations. According to Pettigrew, friendships are important because they increase feelings of interest, concern and sympathy for ethnic outgroups. For numerical reasons, ethnic outgroup friendships are more exceptional for the Dutch. In addition, multiculturalism is typically seen as supporting the culture and position of minority groups. This explains why a positive relationship between outgroup friendships and multiculturalism was found for the Dutch participants and not for the Turks/Moroccans. Hence, providing opportunities for and stimulating inter-ethnic friendships offers the possibility of improving Dutch people's attitude towards multiculturalism.

Multiculturalism is a much contested and emotionally loaded concept: not only in everyday life but also in political science and philosophy (Kelly, 2002). The various issues and dilemmas surrounding multiculturalism have been addressed from different liberal perspectives (Barry, 2001; Kymlicka, 1995) and from more

communitarian ones (Parekh, 2000; Taylor, 1994). In comparison to all this academic work, little is known about how various ideological notions influence people's assessment of multiculturalism. Social psychologists' increased interest in questions of ideology and legitimacy is relatively recent (Jost & Major, 2001). In Study 2, we focused on communalism and individualism. In political science, the former is typically used to defend some version of multiculturalism whereas the latter forms the basis for criticizing the group level approach inherent in multiculturalism. For both the Dutch and the Turks/Moroccan group, the results show that higher agreement with communalism was related to stronger support for multiculturalism. Thus, adherence to the ideal of group commitment and the importance of cultural communities was associated with a more positive multicultural attitude. Individualism, on the other hand, had a negative association with multiculturalism. People who find individualistic values important do not tend to approve of thinking in group terms and are more concerned with individual responsibility and autonomy. These results indicate that people's reactions toward multiculturalism depend not only on group status, ingroup identification, perceived discrimination and outgroup friendships, but also on their adherence to values of communalism and individualism. These values provide important ideological support or criticism for all kinds of social arrangements and policies, including multiculturalism.

In conclusion, this research has shown that social psychological variables are highly relevant for understanding the endorsement of multiculturalism by ethnic majority and minority groups. The latter group was found to be clearly more in favor of multiculturalism than the former. Furthermore, ingroup identification, perceived discrimination, outgroup friendships, and ideological notions appeared to be related independently to multiculturalism. However, some of these relations were moderated by group status. High ethnic identification and outgroup friendships turned out to be related to, respectively, lower and higher endorsement of multiculturalism among the majority group. In contrast, high ethnic identification was related to stronger endorsement of multiculturalism among the minority groups. The effects for perceived structural discrimination, communalism and individualism were similar for both groups of participants.

As far as causality is concerned, the present study was predicated on the assumption that ethnic identification, perceived discrimination, outgroup friendships, and ideological notions influence the endorsement of multiculturalism. However, the causal direction of the effects cannot be determined. Multiculturalism might also lead to stronger identification (Verkuyten, 2005) with one's ethnic group and a less strong emphasis on individualism. The former causal effect is implied by policies and initiatives that stress the positive effects of multicultural ideologies and initiatives. However, it is highly unlikely that the relationship is unidirectional. In many countries, including the Netherlands, the discussion about the need for and merits of multiculturalism is not settled. There is an ongoing, lively public debate on ethnic minority and majority issues; hence, it is more than likely that ethnic identification, group perceptions and ideologies influence people's attitudes towards multiculturalism. Thus, a bi-directional relationship is more plausible.

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